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FARM WOMEN GO TO COLLEGE

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by Mrs. John Maddy, Farm Woman, Berkey, Ohio, delivered in the Home Demonstration Radio Hour, March 6, 1935, and broadcast by a network of 49 associate NBC radio stations.

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We farm women of Ohio have the opportunity to go to college through the Extension Department of the College of Agriculture in our State University. The President of Ohio State University, the Dean of the College of Agriculture, State Extension Director, State Home Demonstration Leader, her assistants, the Specialists and County Home Demonstration Agents are the Faculty members. The instructors are subject matter specialists and Home Demonstration Agents; the students are rural homemakers; and our farm homes are the laboratories. Our studies are entirely elective. The classrooms are in town halls, lodge halls, school buildings, or, as in my community, our own homes. Women seem to prefer project meetings in a home for the air of hospitality which is ever present there.

Any program to be effective needs careful planning. To assist with this phase of the work, advisory groups were created which are called Home Extension Councils. These Councils provide the Home Demonstration Agents closer contacts with the women. The women in each township of Lucas County select two representatives to serve as Home Council members. These women are leaders in their communities and they truly do represent their neighbors. The women feel free to inform council members as to just what they'd like to have for the year's activities and do get what they want.

We have eagerly learned how to stretch family incomes through Sewing Machine and Oil Stove Clinics, Bread Making and Soap Making. Since so much more butchering is being done on Ohio farms, there is an abundance of fat, and we younger women needed to learn how to make soap while the older women have learned to simplify and improve their methods, thus producing a finer quality of soap. Making cheese of surplus milk - provided a finer product for our table as well as adding to cash income. Farm Markets have aided too.

Along with these, we have not lost sight of other interests which afford a well-rounded development such as establishing travelling libraries and visits to Art Museums.

No one is more interested in providing wholesome food for her family than a farm woman, hence we have had many projects in the field of Nutrition, Canning, Meal Planning, Community Meals, Nutrition letters to young mothers, Vegetable cookery and Bread Making. We Ohio women needed to learn and we did learn how to make good bread from winter wheat that we produce and exchange for flour at the mills.

Sometimes we mothers think too much of our children's welfare, (I know for I have three youngsters) and neglect our own, but through health project work, we have become more health conscious.

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Besides the studies in recreation, the project meetings themselves are recreation combined with learning - for example such projects as rug-making and recanning. Womens' camps which have been so successful are for some women their sole recreation from the year's labor.

We should not stress too much the economic value received from Home Demonstration work, for there are many intangible values such as the confidence inspired in ourselves when we find we can remodel a dress and feel smartly dressed when it is finished; the joy that comes from restoring fine articles of furniture; the cooperation and service; the friendliness and good will created among the women - these are worthwhile.

To some of us other opportunities are available. Each year at Farmers' Week at the Ohio State University we have the opportunity to gain additional knowledge in the fields in which we are most interested. One of the interesting features of the program is the annual get-together of Home Council members. Here women from every county gather to discuss Extension work for the whole state. We banquet together, getting acquainted with our more distant neighbors who talk the same language.

This conference is always held the first day of Farmers' Week, so while we are right on the campus we stay to attend other sessions of the program which are inspirational and at the same time provide a change in our usual kind of recreation.

We do appreciate the changes the years have brought in what are considered women's activities and wish to have our place in their development, because a day or two away from home and family makes us realize that we need all the help we can receive in working out our big job which is that of a homemaker.

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